

Message Text

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UNCLAS MARSEILLE 0298

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV
SUBJECT: NEW PROBLEMS FOR THE SOCIALISTS.

SUMMARY

1. THE SOCIALISTS, WHO LOST GROUND IN THE CONSULAR DISTRICT TO THE LEFT AND RIGHT DURING THE RECENT LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, FIND THEIR POSITION IMPERILED EVEN FURTHER BY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN AIX EN PROvence AND MONTPELLIER. AT AIX, THE SOCIALIST MAYOR WHO WON THE RACE IN MARCH 1977 HAS LOST HIS SEAT TO THE MAJORITE FOLLOWING A VOTE FRAUD CASE. AT MONTPELLIER REPORTS INDICATE GROWING EXASPERATION WITH SOCIALIST MAYOR FRECHE.

2. AT AIX EN PROvence PS MAYOR CICCOLINI WAS SUSPENDED FROM OFFICE SEVERAL MONTHS AGO AS THE RESULT OF A FRAUDULENT VOTE CHARGE MADE BY ALAIN JOISSAINS, THE UNSUCCESSFUL PR MAYORIAL CANDIDATE IN MARCH 1977. JOISSAIN S ALLEGATION WAS FOUND VALID BY AN ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL
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AT MARSEILLE EARLIER THIS YEAR AND SUBSEQUENTLY SUSTAINED ON MAY 3 BY THE CONSEIL D ETAT IN PARIS. JOISSAINS LOST THE MARCH 1977 SECOND TOUR CONTEST BY A SCANT 700 VOTES, LESS THAN 2% OF THE 39000 VOTES CAST. HE BASED HIS FRAUD CHARGE ON CICCOLINI S PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT, MADE AFTER THE FIRST TOUR, THAT THE NUMBER TWO LEFTIST CONTENDER WHO DROPPED OUT OF THE RACE WHEN CICCOLINI S LIST GOT A

MAJORITY IN THE FIRST ELECTION ROUND HAD RELEASED HIS SUPPORTERS TO VOTE FOR CICCOLINI. THE INVESTIGATORS FOUND THAT THIS HAD NOT IN FACT OCCURED, AND THAT THE LEFTIST CANDIDATE WHO STEPPED DOWN HAD DONE SO WITHOUT URGING HIS SUPPORTERS TO VOTE FOR ANY PARTICULAR CANDIDATE.

3. THE NEW ELECTION WHICH WAS CONCLUDED LAST SUNDAY SHOWS A SUBSTANTIAL GAIN FOR THE MAJORITE. FIRST TOUR RESULTS ON JUNE 18 WHERE JOISSAINS (UDF-RPR) 17,060 AGAINST CICCOLINI (PS-MRG) 12,131 AND 5336 FOR OTHER PERSONALITIES, INCLUDING COMMUNISTS. THE SECOND TOUR RUN-OFF ON JUNE 25, GAVE JOISSAINS (UDF-RPR) 20,829 VS CICCOLINI (PS-MRG) 18,940. THIS COMPARES WITH CICCOLINI 19,791 AND JOISSAINS 19,063 IN MARCH OF 1977. THE SHIFT AWAY FROM CICCOLINI TO JOISSAINS IS ESPECIALLY INTERESTING SINCE LOCAL ATTITUDES IN GENERAL REMAIN FRIENDLY TOWARDS CICCOLINI WHO IS VIEWED AS A CONGENIAL MAN, STRONGLY INTERESTED IN THE PROGRESS OF AIX EN PROvence, WHO HAS DONE MUCH DURING HIS ADMINISTRATION OF THE PAST 10 YEARS TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC HEALTH OF AIX WHILE MAINTAINING ITS ATTRACTIONS AS A PLEASANT RESIDENTIAL AND ACADEMIC CITY. AS FOR JOISSAINS HE IS WELL CONSIDERED BUT HAS NO STRONG AND DEEP BASE OF SUPPORT. THUS, AT THIS POINT AT LEASTN, THE VOTE IN AIX SEEMS TO REFLECT MORE OF A POLITICAL SHIFT THAN IT DOES A SPARRING MATCH BETWEEN PERSONALITIES. THE AFFAIR IS IRONI BECAUSE IT WAS CICCOLINI WHO WON THE SEAT IN 1967 ON THE HEELS OF A VOTE UNCLASSIFIED

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FRAUD WHICH TURNED OUT OF OFFICE THE THEN SUCCESSFUL PR CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR.

4. AT MONTPELLIER, PS MAYOR FRECHE, WHO WON CITY HALL IN MARCH 1977 FROM LONG-TIME INDEPENDENT FRANCOIS DELMAS, APPEARS TO BE IN SOME TROUBLE. HE IS GENERATING CONSIDERABLE DISPLEASURE AND DISAPPOINTMENT AMONG HIS LOCAL SOCIALIST COLLEAGUES. THIS SEEMS TO STEM FROM ALLEDGED AUTOCRATIC STYLE, QUICK ANGER, UNREASONABLENESS, AND LACK OF SUFFICIENT COMMUNICATION. IT IS SAID THESE TRAITS WERE THE MAIN REASON M. FRECHE WAS UNABLE TO RETAIN HIS DEPUTE SEAT IN THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTION AND LOST IT TO M. DELMAS. THESE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE INTERFERED WITH THE SMOOTH WORKING OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL AND LIE BEHIND A RECENT MOVE BY SOME PS YOUNG WOLVES TO PUBLICALLY QUESTION WHERE THE PS AND THE MONTPELLIER ADMINISTRATION GO FROM HERE.

THOUGH THE PROBLEM DOES NOT POSE A SERIOUS QUESTION TO THE CONTINUANCE OF THE FRECHE ADMINISTRATION AT CITY HALL, IT DOES PROVIDE ADVERSARY ELEMENTS WITH USEFUL AMMUNITION AGAINST THE SOCIALISTS. EX-MAYOR AND NOW PR DEPUTE DELMAS CAN BE COUNTED ON TO TAKE MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE

OF FRECHE S PLIGHT AS HE LOOKS TOWARD THE NEXT MAYORIAL
ELECTIONS IN 1982. MEIMA

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